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JAPAN AND RUSSIA IN THE FAR EAST.

BY JAMES MURDOCH.

AMONG the many strange developments in the history of the last three or four decades, the rise of Japan to the position of something like a great Power must be set down as one of the most remarkable. Doubtless, when the history of the period comes to be written calmly and dispassionately, and with a full command of materials, this achievement of the erstwhile hermit nation will be ranked with the unification of Italy and the formation of the new German Empire, and Okubo and Kido, with the younger men who followed them and carried on their work—Ito, Inouye, Mutsu, Okuma, Yamagata and Matsugata—will be credited with finding satisfactory solutions for problems quite as difficult and quite as complex as those that Cavour and Bismarck had to confront. In some respects the problems of the Japanese statesmen seemed much harder than those that had to be dealt with in Italy and Central Europe in the sixties. For in Japan it was not merely a matter of stripping a number of petty potentates of some or all of their powers, and of welding their subjects into one strongly compacted nation with all the institutions of a free people, for which the intelligent among these subjects had been longing for years. Here it was a case of passing from feudalism to modern industrialism, where competition is the regulating force, and where caste has no privileges. It was a transition from the despotism of some two hundred and sixty petty local princes, controlled in some ways by the still more crushing despotism of the Shogunate, to self-government and representative institutions, with powers and responsibilities quite as full as in most European States. And, so far from the people expressing any longing for these representative institutions, the very leaders of the national movement at first knew little or nothing about them, or even about their ex-

istence in foreign lands. In the early sixties, we find Kido and Ito in disguise frequenting the house of an American citizen (the first Japanese naturalized in the United States), and eagerly questioning him about the system of government of the great Republic. It was Kido who presided in the first national deliberative assembly in 1869, and it is needless to say that Ito is the father of the present Japanese Constitution.

On the other hand, the makers of modern Japan had factors in their favor on which neither Cavour nor Bismarck could count in their efforts. In the first place, there was no religious problem to be dealt with in Japan; for the Japanese is an indifferentist in religion, and extremely tolerant of all beliefs, provided their profession does not militate against the independence and political interests of the country. In the second place, the apostles of the new order, from contact with foreign agencies, knew far more than their opponents did; and the superiority in knowledge and prowess evinced by the men of Satsuma and Choshiu was overwhelming; and so, backed up as they were by the powerful and progressively inclined clans of Hizen and of Tosa, after they had subverted the power of the Shogunate, they found themselves all-powerful.

Besides all this, in favor of the reformers there was a circumstance still more important. In Italy King Victor Emmanuel counted for something, and in Germany the King of Prussia counted for a very great deal. But in neither of these cases did the royal title carry with it anything like the moral authority that attached to the semi-divine name of the Mikado in Japan. Now, in accomplishing the overthrow of the Shogunate, the men of Choshiu and Satsuma had ostensibly made common cause with the ignorant and anti-foreign court nobles, who were bitterly opposed to all intercourse with the outside world. But once the Tokugawa power was crushed, the reformers soon made it clear to their allies that the exclusion policy on which their minds were bent was impracticable, and that the only course open to the country was the adoption of the very policy of international intercourse pursued by the Shogunate which had so excited their hate. In spite of themselves, the most bigoted exclusionists all of a sudden found themselves committed to liberal ideas. The Emperor himself, then sixteen years old, went to the Council of State, and before the nobles took an oath promising that "a de-

liberative assembly should be formed; that all measures should be decided by public opinion; that the uncivilized customs of former times should be broken through; that the impartiality and justice displayed in the workings of nature should be adopted as the basis of action, and that intellect and learning should be sought for throughout the world, in order to establish the foundations of the Empire." The extent to which this declaration of the youthful sovereign facilitated the work of the makers of modern Japan is simply incalculable.

It was in 1868 that this famous declaration was made, and the policy therein outlined has now been in operation for nearly a third of a century. With what precise measure of success it has been carried out it is not exactly easy to say. Certainly, some of the greatest men in Japan entertain no very optimistic views on the matter. Speaking to a representative of one of the Tokyo daily newspapers a short time ago, Marquis Ito very gravely asked whether, with the exception of her army and her navy, Japan has brought to creditable completion any one of the enterprises undertaken by her during the *Meiji* era. Of course, it is highly probable that, at the bottom of his heart, the Marquis is not nearly so pessimistic as his tone indicates him to be; the query was doubtless put with the view of stirring his countrymen to fresh efforts. But, in truth, any one fairly conversant with modern Japanese history must admit that modern Japan has been built up in pretty much the same fashion as that in which a Japanese erects his house. In the first place, piles are driven to support the beams on which the uprights are reared, and then the roof is put on, and the walls and the interior details are finally finished off, often in a very leisurely and sometimes in a very flimsy manner. Provision for the maintenance of order and for the security of personal property, and for a few of the other more essential elements of social stability, were made; and then the Japanese statesmen threw their main energies into the task of providing the country with an army and a navy that would make the nation not merely safe but also formidable, and so respected; and as to the success that has attended Japan's statesmen in putting on what may be regarded as the national roof, there is not much room for doubt.

However, when we turn to the progress made in the internal economy of the Empire, it must be admitted that the state of

things there is not nearly so satisfactory as it might be. As regards population, Japan has more inhabitants than two of the great Powers of Europe—more than four of them if the British and French colonial possessions be left out of account. Yet, the total national wealth of this country of 44,000,000 inhabitants is not so very much greater than that of the small Kingdom of the Netherlands, with its population of 5,000,000. Lately, three estimates of the national wealth of Japan have been made by native statisticians. The highest of these sets down the national belongings at \$7,500,000,000, the lowest at some \$4,000,000,000, while the latest, and possibly the most trustworthy, one gives \$5,600,000,000 as the approximate figure. (Some years ago the Dutch national wealth was valued at \$4,000,000,000.) And as regards the gross annual earnings of the Japanese people, the comparison is not very much more satisfactory; for the last statistician referred to estimates these at no more than \$825,000,000. For 1899, the foreign trade of Japan amounts to just \$5 per head of the population. Of course, since the Revolution of 1868 there has undoubtedly been a very considerable increase of wealth in the country. Old industries have been expanded, and new and unheard-of industries have been set on foot and developed. But this development has been in comparatively few directions, and in several cases there seems to be ground for questioning the soundness of some of the most considerable of these enterprises. At present in Japan in the spinning industry there are some 1,050,000 spindles at work, and some of the companies have just paid extremely handsome dividends. But a year or less ago a good many of these concerns were in a bad way; several of them paid no dividends at all, while others actually got into the bankruptcy court. And foreign experts who have been through some of these establishments assert that their reserve funds are insufficient, and that what they allow for wear and tear of machinery is glaringly inadequate. Many of the recently established enterprises suffer from a sad dearth of capital, and indeed the great problem in Japan is how to effect the introduction of capital from abroad.

But, besides a lack of capital, there is a lack of something quite as important. The great captain of industry has not yet appeared in Japan in anything like the numbers the development of the national resources demands; while even the few able and enterprising native capitalists find their efforts checked by a

woeful dearth of lieutenants capable of executing their projects. The greatest of the few millionaires has in his service as an adviser one of the shrewdest and most capable business men in the Far East. Time and again, this long-headed Scotchman has laid before his principal projects that promised a sure return of thirty, forty and even fifty per cent. on the money invested. And, time and again, his chief, on going through the facts and figures put before him, has said: "All that you represent is perfectly correct. But yet there is one fatal objection to undertaking the enterprise: Where are we to get the men to carry it through?" On account of this two-fold lack of capital and of capable managers, the industry and commerce of the country do not expand at anything like the rate one would naturally expect. Such enterprises as the Formosan Railway (with a Government guarantee of six per cent.) and the Seoul-Fusan Railway cannot be proceeded with, while the valuable concessions obtained in China by the Shimonoseki Treaty remain almost entirely unexploited. And another circumstance militates yet more strongly against the growth of Japanese commerce. While there are not a few merchants in the country whose word is as good as their bond, yet it has to be confessed that the average Japanese trader's standard of commercial morality is anything but a high one. However, this unfortunate fact admits of explanation, if not of excuse; and there seems to be ground for believing that, with lapse of time and the teachings of bitter experience, the old maxim that "Honesty is the best policy" will be appreciated at something like its real value. This phase of the situation has been dwelt on at some length; for, in the case of a struggle with Russia, hostilities will not be confined to one campaign or even to two. In the end, the affair will come to be a question of staying power and of national resources. And it is in this matter of national resources that Japan's ultimate weakness lies.

To revert to our house-building simile, the walls and the interior furnishings of the national structure are not particularly sound in one or two other respects. The state of communications leaves much to be desired. Complaints about the vagaries of the postal and telegraph services are both loud and frequent. In such a progressive country as Japan one would expect the express trains on the main Government line to make a better record than three hundred and seventy-six miles in sixteen or seventeen hours.

Furthermore, from the flimsy fashion of its construction, portions of the line in question get washed away, or at least so badly damaged as to impede the traffic for days, three or four times every year. Nowhere in Japan are the roads macadamized; in the metropolis itself, with the exception of the avenues in front of the Imperial Palace, the streets become quagmires or paddy fields when it rains, and dust clouds when a dry wind blows. Much has been written about the electric tramways of Japan. As a matter of fact, Nagoya has about one mile and Kioto some three miles of them.

With respect to education, matters are far from being as they should be. There are some 60,000 elementary school teachers in Japan, but 30,000 more are wanted, and cannot be found. Nor is this any matter for astonishment when the average pay is some twelve or fifteen (American) cents *per diem*, and when a jinrikisha puller makes twenty-five (American) cents easily. In mere attendance at elementary schools, Japan (with some sixty-seven per cent. of her school population) is ahead of Russia, the Balkan States and the whole of southern Europe; twenty per cent. behind Austria-Hungary, and much more in the rear of all the other central and northern European countries. In provision for higher and university education, she is behind not only the whole of Europe (comparing as she does unfavorably with such hopeless countries as Portugal and Roumania), but even all the debt-ridden Republics of South America, except Brazil and Paraguay. And from top to bottom, with a stray exception here and there, the instruction given is more noted for its inefficiency than for anything else. From the scope of this indictment, however, naval, military and medical education must be emphatically excluded.

Yet, unsatisfactory and in a manner depressing, at first view, as all this is, it ceases to be so very disquieting when one takes a calm and dispassionate survey of the nation's history and achievements during the last thirty years. The simple fact is that the revolution of 1868 and the course it committed the country to, demanded that new efforts and enterprises should be made in scores of directions. For every one of these, money was necessary; and so the tax upon the national resources was enormous. As a consequence, as time went on, the Government saw that it must throw its main efforts upon vital essentials, and leave less important undertakings in a more or less unsatisfactory con-

dition. The main and most urgent concern was to get the national roof on; under its sheltering protection the walls might be finished off at leisure. Now that Japanese statesmen have all but brought the object of their chief concern to a successful completion, it is not unnatural to conclude that they will presently address themselves vigorously to putting the internal economy of the country into a more efficient condition than it is in at present.

That Japan has had to make great efforts and great sacrifices to provide herself with her splendid army and navy, does not admit of the least question. One instance, although in itself trifling, as regards the \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000 it brought into the treasury, will serve to illustrate this proposition. In 1892-93 Marquis (then Count) Ito found himself confronted by a hostile majority in the Lower House, who, by refusing supplies, seemed likely to interfere seriously with the Government's programme of naval expansion. The difficulty was got over by the issue of an Imperial Rescript, stating that the Emperor gave up ten per cent. of the Civil List for the following six years, and ordering all Government officials to surrender the same percentage of their salaries for the same time, to be devoted to the construction of warships. Every official at first obeyed cheerfully; but, as time went on, although there were no open expressions of discontent, there was much secret grumbling among the middle and lower ranks of the public servants. Many of these found it hard to live on their salaries at the best of times, and when a man drawing some five dollars per month was called upon to hand over fifty cents of that sum, as indeed happened, his financial situation became very serious. Many of the ablest and most capable officials exerted themselves to find employment elsewhere, and the men who took their places were not, as a rule, very noted for ability. There is little doubt that the measure in question resulted in impairing the efficiency of the Civil Service of the country. But it accomplished the end it aimed at, and it was on the whole a well-considered step.

Since the conclusion of the war with China, there has been a great expansion of Japan's armaments. What this expansion amounts to may perhaps be best gathered by glancing at the official classification of the ships in the Japanese fleet, issued some short time ago by the Minister of Marine, and observing the position in it held by the vessels with which Japan annihilated the sea power of China. Leaving out smaller craft, we find the present Japanese

Navy classified as first and second class battleships, and first, second and third class cruisers. In the war of 1894-95, Japan had only one small battleship, which now stands at the very bottom of her list. The "Fuso" is now some two and twenty years of age; and, with her tonnage of 3,700, she makes a poor appearance alongside the four monsters of from 12,500 to 15,000 tons that now appear as the list of first-class battleships. Even alongside the other vessel in the second class, the "Chinyen," of 7,400 tons, captured from the Chinese at Wei-hai-wei, she looks diminutive. But in speed there is not much to choose between these two, both steaming about thirteen knots, and being a pair of veritable lame-ducks in comparison with the four new first-class battleships, which can accomplish eighteen or nineteen knots.

In 1895 Japan possessed none of the four first-class cruisers (of some 9,800 tons) now entered in the official list. The brunt of the strife at the battle of the Yalu fell upon six of the nine second-class cruisers now in the navy, three new ones—the "Takasago," the "Kasagi" and the "Chitose" having been built since then. In addition to that, the torpedo flotilla has been greatly augmented, while of the score of torpedo-destroyers included in the ship-building programme (twelve built or building in England, four in France and four in Germany), more than half are already in Japanese waters, and the others will soon arrive.

From this it will appear that the naval strength of the country in 1895 is only a fraction of what it will be early this summer, shortly after the time of the projected grand naval manoeuvres. The addition of the captured Chinese battleship, "Chinyen," of 7,400 tons, does not count for very much, but the four new first-class battleships (probably the "Asahi" will be here by midsummer), of a gross tonnage of close on 55,000, and a gross complement of 2,681 men, add immeasurably to the sea power of Japan. Two of these—"Fuji" (12,450) and "Yashima" (12,140)—are almost exact reproductions of the British "Royal Sovereign," while the "Shikishima" and the "Asahi," of about 15,000 tons each, are improved "Majestics." Besides these four, two other battleships of the same type as the "Shikishima" are building in England—the "Hatsuse" at Elswick, and an unnamed vessel at Barrow, but the "Hatsuse" was not to be handed over until March, 1900, and the other ship a good deal later on.

Four of the six new first-class cruisers included in the ship-

building programme have either already arrived, or will arrive in summer. And in every respect these constitute a formidable increase to Japan's naval strength, for it is more than probable that they themselves could give a good account of the whole fleet possessed by Japan at the time of the late war, if pitted against it. Ranging from 9,400 to 9,875 tons, they are a trifle larger than the United States' "Brooklyn" (9,215 tons), and fully as powerful fighting machines. They have about the same speed as she, the "Asama," for example, at her trials doing 20.37 knots with natural and 22.07 with forced draught. The "Brooklyn" carries a heavier armament, having eight 8-inch against the "Asama's" four 8-inch guns, although against the "Brooklyn's" twelve 5-inch the Japanese cruiser carries fourteen 6-inch guns. As regards protection, the advantage is with the Japanese ships; for against the "Brooklyn's" belt of 3 inches, the "Asama" has one of 7 inches of Harveyized steel. The four Japanese cruisers are likewise protected in their gun positions by 6 inches of the same material, a fact which gives them a considerable advantage over the Russian "Rurik" (10,923 tons) and "Rossia" (12,130 tons), whose batteries have practically no protection. As the "Rossia" steams twenty and the "Rurik" only eighteen knots, against them the "Asama", and her consorts should show to advantage, in spite of the circumstance that these two Russian vessels have slightly stronger secondary batteries.

Even as regards second-class cruisers, the addition of three new vessels to the six that fought at the Yalu is no inconsiderable item. Of these the "Takasago" (4,160 tons), built at Elswick, has a speed of twenty-four knots, and an armament of two 8-inch, ten 4.7-inch, twelve 12-pounders, six 2½-pounder quick-firers and five torpedo tubes. The two American-built vessels—the "Kasagi" at Philadelphia, and the "Chitose" at San Francisco—are slightly larger, but slightly slower, the tonnage of the former being 4,978 and of the latter 4,836, with a speed of nearly twenty-three knots.

Of smaller craft, the official list gives five third-class cruisers, ten coast-defense ships, two first-class and fifteen second-class gunboats, with four despatch vessels and a torpedo depot ship. Besides the destroyers already alluded to, other vessels below second-class cruiser rank are being constructed; but, as they will not be available by summer, there is no need to enter into particulars about them. By that date the Japanese navy will have a tonnage of

something between 210,000 and 220,000 tons, against the Russian of 85,000 to 90,000 (including the "Petropavlovsk"), unless, as will doubtless be the case, more Russian ships be sent to the East.

This expansion of the Japanese naval force is certainly a remarkable one. But what, perhaps, is equally noteworthy is the phenomenal development of her mercantile marine. In 1893, exclusive of native craft, Japan had a tonnage of 155,000 tons. At present she has between 600,000 and 650,000 tons of merchant shipping. This is to a great extent the result of substantial Government subsidies. In 1894-95, the country had to make considerable efforts to provide herself with a fleet of fifty-one transports. A fleet of twice as many vessels is now readily available.

When we turn to the matter of her land forces, we find that since 1894 Japan has been far from idle. At the beginning of that year, the Japanese army on a peace footing consisted of 69,000 officers and men. After the war with China, a programme of army expansion was laid down, in terms of which the Japanese land forces were ultimately to amount to 145,000 men on a peace footing, and between 530,000 and 540,000 men on a war footing. What progress has been made with that programme may be inferred from the fact that, at the end of 1898, there were 120,800 men with the colors, besides 4,520 students in the military schools, while the first reserve numbered over 115,000 and the second 75,000 men. Now, of course, these figures have been very considerably increased, and even at present on a war footing the army may be safely placed at not less than 360,000 men of all arms.

It is by no means uninteresting to note some of the details of this expansion programme. In 1894, besides the Imperial Guards and Yezo militia, the Japanese army consisted of six divisions. The headquarters of these were at (from north to south) Sendai, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima (all in the main island) and at Kumamoto in Kiushiu. With the exception of the last, all these places are on the Pacific or inland sea littoral—facing away from Siberia, that is. Now the Yezo militia has been abolished and a seventh division has been formed in the Hokkaido, while five more are being established at Marugame in Shikoku, at Kokura near the Straits of Shimonoseki, at Fukuchiyama, at Kanazawa and at Hirosaki—all on the coast of the Sea of Japan. That is, *five of the new divisions directly front Korea or Siberia*. Japan has evidently made up her mind to make her back door secure. Her

Pacific Ocean and Inland Sea approaches are so strongly fortified that any invasion from these quarters is impossible. At the time of the war with China her weak point was at Tsuruga, on the Japan Sea, almost directly behind Osaka and Kioto, the second and third cities in the Empire, and the chief seats of her nascent manufactures. With Tsuruga Bay fortified as it now is, and flanked by army divisions at Fukuchiyama on the west and at Kanazawa on the east (now with railway communication), any hostile landing at that point is effectually provided against.

In view of all this, it will be readily conceded that, to revert to our figure of speech, in their efforts to provide the national structure with a sound and thoroughly weather-proof roof, Japanese statesmen have been phenomenally successful. That an ordinary nation of 44,000,000 inhabitants should have accomplished so much should not perhaps afford any great matter for surprise. But, as already pointed out, although having the population of a first-class Power, Japan, as regards wealth and resources, is not so very much ahead of the small Kingdom of the Netherlands, or of Scotland—if, indeed, she be ahead of the latter at all. Naturally enough, then, this effort has taxed her very severely, and it is only the consummate ability of her rulers and certain exceptional circumstances that have enabled her to accomplish it.

By a certain authority the Japanese have been characterized as “artistic and all that, but muddle-pated in the matter of business.” Doubtless, the criticism is not without point, for in his transactions the average Japanese trader gives very few indications of the possession of any considerable financial capacity. But the management of the National Treasury has all along been in the hands of no mere average men. Under its successive ministers—Okuma, Matsugata and Watanabe—the Department of Finance has been exceedingly well administered. Lately, it is true, certain of its minor measures have evoked a good deal of adverse criticism, but these are but petty blemishes in a sound twenty years’ record. In 1887 the national debt stood at yen 307,000,000; seven years later (just before the outbreak of the Chinese war in 1894) it had been reduced to yen 283,500,000. Besides, at that date there was an accumulated surplus of yen 23,439,000 (say \$11,700,000) in the Treasury. It was to this accumulated surplus that the Government first had recourse at the opening of hostilities. As they progressed, domestic loans to the amount of \$58,400,000 were raised,

and as these loans have not been refunded, and as other small liabilities have been incurred, Japan's national debt (without including the £10,000,000 English loan) stands at some \$207,000,000, with annual charges of \$11,400,000, or some 25 cents per head of the population.

Out of the war with China, Japan netted a very large sum of money. Including the money spent in the reduction of Formosa, down to March 31, 1896, the total cost of the hostilities with China amounted to almost exactly \$100,000,000. (This amount, it may be remarked, included \$3,500,000 for rewards, and some \$2,800,000 for the expenses of the Formosan Government, for arsenal construction and for a submarine cable to Formosa.) Together with the \$22,500,000 received for the retrocession of the Liautung Peninsula, the Chinese indemnity brought into the national purse a total of \$182,500,000. Thus, Japan's direct monetary gain was as much as \$82,500,000. Of this total of \$182,500,000, only about \$40,000,000 were employed to defray the actual expenses of the war. Between \$28,000,000 and \$29,000,000 have been devoted to army expansion, of which about \$24,000,000 will have been expended by the end of this year. No less a sum than \$69,600,000 has been apportioned for the development of the navy, of which over \$50,000,000 has already been disbursed. In addition, \$15,000,000 have been set aside for the maintenance of warships. As regards the disposal of the remainder of the indemnity, the main items are \$10,000,000 presented to the Emperor, \$6,000,000 spent on Japan's white elephant, Formosa, \$5,000,000 as a fund to provide against the disasters of nature, and \$5,000,000 as an educational fund. In reality, these last two sums constitute a war reserve, for it is only the interest accruing from their investment that is devoted to the purposes specified.

It thus appears that, including the \$15,000,000 set apart for the maintenance of warships, Japan has a war reserve of \$25,000,000. Besides, in the event of an early outbreak of hostilities, the late London loan of (nominally) £10,000,000 would be available. However, as the flotation of that loan was not attended with the measure of success that might have been expected, that sum of £10,000,000 represents no more than \$43,000,000 or \$44,000,000. Then the unexpended portion of the amount devoted to army and navy expansion could also be utilized, while the Budget for the next year shows an estimated surplus of about \$23,000,000 in the

ordinary accounts. Thus, in the event of war, the immediate financial resources of the Government would be ample for the prosecution of one campaign at least.

To speak generally, in the event of no occurrence to disturb the ordinary course of affairs, the national finances of Japan are thoroughly sound. It is true that the results of the flotation of the loan in England might readily convey a very different impression. But these results are not difficult to explain. The shortly preceding or simultaneous issue of Chinese and Russian loans may have had something to do with the matter. But not nearly so much as Japanese financiers assert. In the case of the Chinese loan, security was offered. As security for her obligations, Japan steadfastly refused to pledge anything but the national credit. Now, the average investor, not so very mistakenly, has no high ideas of the credit of the ordinary Japanese, and this, doubtless, made him look somewhat askance at the investment. But the credit of the Japanese Government is a very different thing indeed from the credit of the average Japanese business man. So far, the Government has been most punctilious in the discharge of all its financial obligations, and there are no apparent grounds for believing that there is to be any change in its traditions in this respect. But between the financial record of the Japanese Treasury and that of the merchant, the British investor did not trouble to distinguish. Furthermore, the Japanese authorities were not without blame in the matter. From the finicking finance of the preceding year—parliamentary squabbles over a slight increase of the land tax, the raising of post and telegraph rates, and the imposition of a few petty taxes that brought in no revenue to compensate for the vexation they caused—the impression got abroad that the Government was terribly put to it to make ends meet. How incorrect that impression was may be inferred from recent developments. In 1895 the *saké* tax brought in \$7,800,000; since its augmentation it fully provides the \$27,000,000 or \$28,000,000 necessary to defray the ordinary annual expenditure on the army and navy. It is quite true that, when the new army divisions are fully established and all the new ships are added to the navy, the expenses of these two services will be quickly increased. But the returns of the *saké* tax bid fair to increase even more quickly, and it is seriously proposed to raise the rate of the excise. Then, with the recovery of her tariff autonomy, the returns of Japan's

customs are rapidly growing in amount. An indication of the true position is afforded by the Budget estimates for next year. The ordinary revenue is therein set down at \$96,500,000; the ordinary expenditure at something over \$73,000,000. Of course, it is perfectly true that for more than the \$23,000,000 surplus even Japan could readily find profitable employment. For the walls of the national house are still in a most unfinished and most unsatisfactory state. For example, for some years down to 1896, the annual losses from inundation were over \$30,000,000; in that year they mounted up to \$68,000,000, or \$19,000,000 in excess of the total revenue for 1895-96. And most of this loss is preventable. Then, as already remarked, education is in a chaotic state, and communications are still very defective, while if Japanese judicial officials are ever to command that respect and confidence from foreigners that they ought to command, the sum of \$2,000,000 annually appropriated to the service of the Ministry of Justice must be very much augmented. And these are only a few of the many matters in the internal economy of the country that urgently need to be taken in hand in real earnest. But perhaps the time for dealing with such affairs in any thorough-going and resolute manner is not just yet. On the mainland of the continent across the water, events are in progress that will continue to claim Japan's keenest attention and probably the exercise of her best energies. For there interests of vital importance to her are gravely involved.

These interests are, of course, more immediately of a political nature. But, besides purely political interests, others of even more serious ultimate importance are at stake. For her economic fabric bids fair to be placed in great jeopardy. It is not, perhaps, very generally recognized that at no very distant date Japan will have to face a population question. In 1872 the population of the islands was officially returned at a little over 33,000,000. It now stands at some 44,000,000 (exclusive of Formosa), or an increase of thirty-three per cent. in twenty-eight years. Possibly, however, it has not been quite so much as the figures indicate, for no census, such as is periodically made in Occidental countries, has hitherto been taken in Japan. The returns are based on the registration system of the country, and that, although yet not quite exhaustive, is now much more complete than it was in 1872. But, granting all that, from the returns of the excess of births over deaths, it ap-

pears that some 400,000 fresh mouths have yearly to be provided for. Now, if it be borne in mind that no more than fourteen per cent. of the 112,000 square miles of old Japan are under cultivation, and that this extent can be added to only with the greatest difficulty, it will readily be conceded that 400,000 fresh mouths yearly added to the odd 43,000,000 these 16,000 square miles have to support, afford substantial grounds for apprehension. Yezo has now just about as many inhabitants as Philadelphia had at the last census, and it will never be able to carry as many as New York and Brooklyn contain at present. The addition of Formosa to the Empire affords no appreciable alleviation to the congestion of the population, for the Japanese succumbs to the diseases of a tropical climate even more quickly than the Caucasian. At this date it is doubtful if there be even 5,000 Japanese settlers in the new possession. Nor does emigration tend to solve the difficulty to any remarkable extent. At present there are not 75,000 Japanese in foreign countries, even including the soldiers Lord Charles Beresford imagines to have been smuggled into Korea under the guise of coolies and merchants. Now, Japan has been in the past, still is mainly, and must be for years, an agricultural country. Hitherto, as a rule, she has managed to raise most of her foodstuffs, and even to export rice to the amount of some \$3,000,000 annually. But in 1897 she had to import foodstuffs to the value of \$23,000,000. It is true that as an offset she exported the usual \$3,000,000 worth of cereals in that year; but still she was \$20,000,000 to the bad in her food bill. This is small compared with the British deficit of £170,000,000 for the same year; but when it is stated that \$20,000,000 represented one-ninth of the total foreign trade of Japan (an agricultural, and not, like Great Britain, a manufacturing country), the circumstance looks somewhat serious. Still more serious would such an incident prove, if Japan had, as she will have a few years hence, a few extra million mouths to feed when her harvest failures occur.

An escape from this menace of a congested population can be found only in one or other or both of two directions. In the first place, Japan may, as she will undoubtedly endeavor to do, borrow a leaf from the economic history of England, and throw her energies into the development of her nascent manufactures. But for any very greatly increased volume of products a foreign market must be found, and there, of course, competition has to be

faced. Even on the fairest of footings, Japanese manufacturers will for long achieve no very brilliant success in such competition, and with a differential tariff against them they would have no chance of success whatsoever. Korea and northern China promise to prove one of their very best future markets; if, however, these districts pass under the rule of the Muscovite, the promise will have but a scanty fulfilment. But, even in the most favorable circumstances, it is extremely questionable whether any possible expansion of her manufactures will ever in itself supply a satisfactory solution of Japan's population question when it becomes really pressing. It seems imperatively necessary that over-sea territories should be found to receive the overflow of her rapidly increasing surplus subjects. And it is only in the Peninsula across the Straits of Tsushima that such territory can be found. How many inhabitants there are in the 80,000 square miles of Korea is not exactly known, the estimates varying from 6,000,000 to 15,000,000, the true figure, perhaps, lying midway between these extremes. Anyhow, the Peninsula may safely be expected to be equal to the support of another 8,000,000 or 10,000,000 souls. Her soil is not infertile, great tracts of it being said to be well suited for sericulture, while she is supposed to be rich in mineral resources. Even as things now stand, she annually exports as much rice as Japan does, and beans to the value of \$1,000,000; and with good government these exports could be multiplied enormously. But good government Korea never will have, so long as she suffers from what is termed her "independence." The course of events has pretty conclusively shown that the Koreans are not capable of governing themselves, and that the figment of "independence" is soon destined to be swept into the limbo of obsolete expressions. About that there is not very much room to doubt; as to whether her destiny is to be counted as a Russian province, or an appanage of Japan, there will in all likelihood be some very keen debate, in which even the *ultima ratio regum* may be invoked as the final and conclusive argument.

For if, as has been shown, Japan is vitally concerned about getting seated in the Peninsula, Russia is concerned about keeping the islanders out of all political control of it. Already they hold one side of the Korean Straits—the Island of Tsushima is strongly fortified—and if they were to establish a strong naval base on the southern coast of the Peninsula, at Masampho or else—

where, they would have full command of the sea communications between Port Arthur and Vladivostok. And with the whole of Korea in Japanese hands, the overland connections between the two Russian bases would never be safe.

Thus, apart from all questions of national prestige, or of wounded national *amour propre*, the decision of the ultimate fate of the moribund Empire of Korea can scarcely fail to cause Japan to direct her keenest attention to the actions of her rival for supremacy in the northeastern Pacific. But questions of national prestige and of wounded national pride are also acutely involved. The average Japanese primary school teacher, who has to contrive to make ends meet on three or four dollars per month, is not exactly the sort of man that can be expected to take any very wide view of the national economic necessities. Yet, in 1896-97, several of these at least were making a point of impressing on the minds of their charges of eight or ten years of age the indispensable necessity of their "growing up to be strong enough to chastise Russia." For this, it is fair to say, they were rebuked by their superiors; yet the circumstance is by no means without its significance. The average Japanese is exceedingly anxious to express in a practical form his gratitude for the "good advice" tendered by Russia and her allies in April, 1895, in consequence of which Japan had to withdraw from the Liautung Peninsula. That advice had also the effect of reviving the well-nigh dead recollection of Enomoto's negotiations at St. Petersburg in 1876, when, in exchange for Sagalien, Japan acquired the Kurile Islands. Furthermore, the ill-will against Russia excited by her intervention was not diminished by the subsequent march of events in Korea.

In the summer of 1895 Japanese influence at Seoul was paramount. While he was Minister there, Count Inouye was undoubtedly by far the most powerful man in the Peninsula, and Inouye honestly tried to exercise all the great power he wielded for the best interests of the little kingdom. The administration was fundamentally reformed, codes of law were being drafted with the advice of Japanese experts, the finances were being put upon a sound basis (Japan advancing a loan of yen 3,000,000), and the army organized and trained by Japanese officers. It was just at this time that the following conversation between a member of the Japanese Diet, who had gone to Seoul, and the Russian representative there was reported in the Tokyo press:

"Mr. Shiba: The latest newspapers from Europe contain a statement that your country intends to acquire in the East a port open during all seasons of the year. May I ask you whether there is any truth in that report?

"Mr. Waeber: There is no truth in that. Such statements may perhaps be found in English papers. The English are very cunning. They always say bad things about us in their papers, and thereby inflict no small injury upon Russia. The story that Russia intends to obtain such a port is a canard manufactured by the English. Russia does not pursue an aggressive policy. You know that she had not invaded any country during the past ten years. You may conclude from this that Russia has no ambition either to make any conquest or to obtain a port in these waters."

In the summer of 1895 Russian influence did not count for very much in Korea, but still it was even then at work below the surface. On Inouye's return, Miura succeeded to the post of Japanese Minister, and on October 8, 1895 (five weeks after his arrival), the Korean Queen was murdered. This terrible outrage was a deadly blow to the Japanese power in the Peninsula. Why Miura was so bitterly opposed to the Queen is not precisely known; for rejecting the counsel of Inouye (impressed upon him again and again) to make a friend of the ablest Korean in the Kingdom his reasons must have been very strong. At all events, on the dead body of the Queen a letter to the Court of St. Petersburg was found requesting it not to transfer Mr. Waeber, its representative in Seoul, to another post, as it proposed to do. Then on February 11, 1896, the King and the Crown Prince carried out a project that had been maturing for some time, and took up their quarters in the Russian Legation. Here they remained until February 20, 1897, and during this year, of course, Russian influence in Seoul gathered force apace. The sixty or seventy Japanese advisers previously in the service of the Korean Government either withdrew or were discharged, and all the reforms set on foot in 1895 were practically nullified. Naturally, all this caused uneasiness in Japan, uneasiness all the greater because of the false position she had been placed in by the *coup* of October 8, 1895. However, what could be done she did, and in June, 1896, the Lobanov-Yamagata Convention, defining the attitude of the two Powers toward Korea, was signed at St. Petersburg. However, the language of this document was somewhat vague; at all events it did not suffice to prevent the Muscovites from sending officers to organize the Korean troops at Seoul, and from a bold attempt to get the management of the Korean finances into their

hands by procuring the appointment of Adviser to the Treasury and of Superintendent of Customs for a Russian official. The document published in the Tokyo journals as a copy of the agreement under which the services of Mr. Alexieff were secured for these positions was in many ways a remarkable one. His services were merely lent to Korea by Russia; the latter paid his normal salary, which Korea supplemented by an honorarium of \$1,500 *per annum*. The period of his engagement was to be unlimited, and, in the event of his withdrawal, no national other than a Korean or a Russian was to be appointed to the office. However, on his arrival in Seoul, M. Alexieff did not find it all smooth sailing. Some time before, Mr. McLeavy Brown, a British subject, had been installed in these very positions, and as Mr. Brown's contract had a good many years to run, he refused to take notice of dismissal from the Korean Government; and, as a matter of fact, he is still in these posts to-day. However, the Russian official did act for some short time in his capacity of Financial Adviser. Meanwhile, Japanese diplomacy had been at work to get the vagueness of the Lobanov-Yamagata Convention rectified, and on April 25, 1898, the Nissi-Rosen Protocol was signed, whose three short articles are worthy of full quotation:

"Art. I. The Imperial Governments of Japan and Russia definitively recognize the sovereignty and entire independence of Korea, and mutually engage to refrain from all direct interference in the internal affairs of that country.

"Art. II. Desiring to avoid every possible cause of misunderstanding in the future, the Imperial Governments of Japan and Russia mutually engage, in case Korea should apply to Japan or to Russia for advice and assistance, not to take any measure in the nomination of military instructors and financial advisers, without having previously come to a mutual agreement on the subject.

"Art. III. In view of the large development of Japanese commercial and industrial enterprise in Korea, as well as the considerable number of Japanese subjects resident in that country, the Imperial Russian Government will not impede the development of the commercial and industrial relations between Japan and Korea.

"Done at Tokyo, in duplicate, this 25th day of April, 1898."

Meanwhile, there had been happenings which at their occurrence greatly puzzled the journalists of the Far East, but which subsequent developments readily accounted for. Toward the end of 1897, Russia had asked for the exclusive concession of some land on Deer Island, which had been previously staked off as a site for a foreign settlement, and the request had been met by

shuffling and evasion. About the same time, the Korean interpreter to the Russian Legation had been set upon and nearly done to death by some of his own countrymen. Besides, there were other indications that the Koreans were becoming very restive under Muscovite domination. But all this did not prepare observers to expect what seemed to be M. de Speyer's extraordinary action in sending his famous despatch of March 7, 1898, to the Korean Foreign Office. The following translation of that document is from the *Seoul Independent*:

"Recently I have been informed that there exists a deplorable condition of affairs in Seoul; many idlers among your people, claiming to be gifted politicians, create disturbance by opposing Russian interests. This state of affairs naturally causes great surprise to my Imperial Sovereign, the Emperor of Russia. At the request of your Imperial Sovereign and your Government, the Russian Government had sent military instructors to drill the soldiers and to guard the palace, and an Adviser for your Finance Department. This action on the part of my Government plainly indicates Russia's intention of helping your country as a neighbor and her desire to strengthen your independence. But your Government did not seem to appreciate the importance of Russia's action at the time, and now your Government freely prevents Russia from accomplishing the advantages and beneficial results for your country which she intended. The present attitude of your Government is so plain that Russia cannot endure this condition much longer. Therefore my Emperor has graciously ordered me to report fully to your Emperor and inquire of your Government definitely whether Korea still desires to be benefited by Russia's help or not, and if the military instructors and Finance Adviser are not considered necessary by your Emperor and your Government, my Government will make some other necessary arrangements according to the circumstances, but your Government must maintain your independence in the future according to its ability. I am awaiting your reply and hope it will be received within twenty-four hours, and I further request Your Excellency to report to your Emperor that I desire to obtain an audience with him for the purpose of informing him of the instructions I have received from my Imperial Sovereign concerning this matter."

Five days later, M. de Speyer received a reply, and from it, to the amazement of everybody, invertebrate Korea appeared to have taken up a strong attitude. The despatch in question was long and rambling, but the pith of it is contained in the two following paragraphs:

"Through your Sovereign's kind motives and your Government's friendly disposition, our military and financial affairs have made much progress. Both the Adviser and instructors diligently and conscientiously discharged their duties, so that the Imperial Guard has been trained satisfactorily and the financial condition of the country placed on a systematic basis. These are all due to the unceasing efforts of your Government and we will never forget your magnanimous spirit.

"Our Government has decided that we will continue to manage our affairs according to the methods which your officials have so kindly introduced, though we must place the controlling power of these departments in the hands of our own countrymen. We will not employ any foreign military instructors or advisers. This decision was arrived at by the unanimous wishes of the old statesmen, the present Government and the people at large; also through the enlightenment and independent spirit which your Government has so diligently inculcated among us. I am sure that your Imperial Sovereign and your Government will be glad to know that our people have become so progressive and enlightened as to desire to maintain their own sovereignty."

The reply of M. de Speyer to this was delightfully sarcastic toward the close. (To understand the opening sentences of his despatch, it must be premised that the Korean Foreign Minister had stated that the Emperor of Korea proposed to "send an envoy to your capital who will carry the personal messages of gratitude from our Emperor to your Sovereign.") The following is the Russian Minister's communication :

"Sir: I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 12th inst., in which communication you have intimated to me that your Government intends to send an ambassador to St. Petersburg. I have just been instructed by my Imperial Sovereign to inform you that the sending of the envoy is not at all necessary, and the Russian Government does not care to receive any message of thanks. Russia only desires to extend her friendliness; but she never cares to force it upon any one. Your Government asked us to send military instructors and a finance adviser and we complied. But now your Government considers that Russian officials are no longer needed, and you state that Korea can manage her own affairs without aid from Russia. Russia only congratulates Korea upon having made such progress in so short a time that she is able to maintain her independence unassisted by foreign instructors and advisers.

"I have already instructed our military officers and Finance Adviser to discontinue their duties in the Korean service.

March 17th, 1898.

"A. DE SPEYER."

Doubtless, Japan's attitude toward the Russian interpretation of the Lobanov-Yamagata Convention, and the approaching agreement on the matter of the Nissi-Rosen Protocol, went a long way to account for this, at first, seemingly inexplicable development in Seoul. But other events of even more startling import were in progress elsewhere, and in all likelihood they had not a little to do with Russia's withdrawal from all open interference with Korean politics for the time being.

On October 18, 1897, it was telegraphed that the Russian fleet had entered Port Arthur with the intention of wintering there. And then, just about the date of signing of the Nissi-Rosen Con-

vention (April 24, 1898), it became known in Japan that the rumors of a convention between Russia and China, in terms of which Port Arthur, Talien-wan and adjacent territory were to be "leased" to the former, were only too well founded, such a convention having been actually signed at Peking on the preceding 27th of March—ten days after the withdrawal of the Russian officers and Financial Adviser from the service of Korea.

Of course, in Japan the ferment caused by this intelligence was intense. The capture of Port Arthur by Japanese troops in 1894 had amazed the world, and the Japanese looked upon that fortress as one of the proudest trophies of the war. At the peace negotiations their minds were resolutely bent upon retaining it. So, when Russia and her allies requested them to retrocede it with the whole Liautung Peninsula to China, the three Powers were asking of Japan a very great deal indeed. However, as the request preferred or the advice proffered (with a backing of forty-seven war vessels) was in the interests of the Peace of the Far East, Japan complied with it as gracefully as she could, and returned to her vanquished enemy the strongest fortress and the best dock-yard in the Far East. This was in April, 1895, and in 1898, within three years from that date, the legitimate booty won for Japan by the prowess of her soldiers had been appropriated by Russia, through the tortuous devices of her diplomats, and the phrase, the "Peace of the Far East," had proved to be nothing but a more extended and expansive fashion of spelling the name of the Muscovite! Naturally enough, there was a violent explosion of popular feeling in Japan. By the masses an immediate war with Russia would have been welcomed, while even some of the less cautious and far-seeing of her statesmen were in no mood to pause to count the ultimate cost of such a struggle. But in the midst of the ferment the ministers in power never for a moment lost their coolness and calmness. Japanese troops still held Wei-hai-wei, and, in terms of the Shimonoseki Treaty, were to hold it until the whole of the indemnity was paid. China had signified her intention of liquidating the whole of that in May. Many publicists and some of her statesmen argued that the Russian occupation of Port Arthur fully justified Japan in keeping her garrison in Wei-hai-wei, even after every cent of the indemnity had been received. But the Tokyo Cabinet did not take that view. Negotiations between Great Britain, China and Japan were set

on foot; and in May the last \$50,000,000 of the indemnity was handed over, the Japanese troops evacuated Wei-hai-wei, and, on July 1, by a convention between China and Great Britain, that port, together with the adjacent waters, was leased to the latter for so long a period as Russia shall retain Port Arthur.

Russia's negotiations at Pekin go a long way to explain the somewhat mysterious cessation of her activity in the Korean Peninsula in March, 1898. With the acquisition of Port Arthur as a naval base, there was no immediate need for her to push her interests aggressively in what Tokyo journals insist upon calling the Japanese sphere of influence. Although her diplomats in Seoul and Pekin ventured to carry things with a high hand—seemingly even to the verge of recklessness—yet the great Northern Power was far from eager for war. Her ends could be compassed by surer and less costly means than that. What she needed before all things was time to strengthen her naval and military position in the Far East. At that time it is doubtful whether she had as many as 75,000 troops in the whole of eastern Siberia, and a concentration of 60,000 of these would have been very difficult. Granted the command of the sea, Japan could have thrown double that number against Vladivostok. It is true that the struggle for the command of the sea would have been a more equal one, although it must be remembered that while Japan had ample docking facilities for the speedy repair of her ships damaged in action, Russia in that respect was seriously handicapped before her acquisition of Port Arthur. Once seated there, the task of most immediate importance to Russia was to make her position there an impregnable one. For the last two years, a great deal of energy has been devoted to this purpose. Much money has already been spent on the strengthening of the fortress, and in the naval budget for next year a further sum of \$2,000,000 is to be expended on the fortifications of Port Arthur and Vladivostok. Into the former, stores and munitions have been pouring in a continuous stream; it is now strongly garrisoned; and the next assailant that ventures to attack the place will find it a good deal more than difficult to emulate the Japanese feat of November 21, 1894. In all likelihood Port Arthur is destined to become the most important of all the naval stations of Russia. The station on the Moorman coast in Lapland will never probably be of very much value, while in the Baltic and the Black Sea alike the Russian

fleets are seriously shut in and hampered. From Port Arthur alone is there free and ready egress to the open ocean at all seasons of the year. This circumstance in itself makes it easy to understand why Russia proposes to add so greatly to the strength of her Pacific fleet. At present, *vis-à-vis* to Japan, that fleet is decidedly weak. Her three battleships would be no match for the "Fuji," the "Yashima" and the "Shikishima." The "Petropavlovsk," of 10,960 tons, and the "Navarin," of 10,200 tons, steam only sixteen knots against the eighteen or nineteen knots of the Japanese line-of-battle ships, while the "Lissoi Veliky," of 8,880 tons, is no faster. As regards first-class cruisers, the Japanese "Tokwa" and "Asama" are fully a match for the "Rossia" and the "Rurik," and the "Azuma" and "Yakumo" (sister ships to the "Asama"), expected here by the end of June, will go a long way toward offsetting the much older, slower and smaller "Vladimir Monomakh," "Dmitri Donskoi," "Pamiat Azova" and "Admiral Nakhimoff." As regards second-class cruisers and smaller ships, the superiority of Japan is simply overwhelming, as indicated by the comparative total tonnages already given. But, if the report be true that Russia is to send several of the eight battleships and six first-class cruisers now in hand to the Far East, the disparity will cease to be on her side.

Russia is not waiting for the completion of her great railway to reduce her military inferiority in the East. In 1898 and the four preceding years, 58,000 troops were despatched to that quarter by the vessels of the volunteer fleet, while only 20,000 returned, and lately the rate of despatch has been greatly increased. At present, a trustworthy authority puts the number of Russian troops of all arms in eastern Siberia and Manchuria at nearly 110,000 men. In addition, there is a large immigration of settlers and of laborers for the construction of the railways in Manchuria. These are being pushed on vigorously; Port Arthur is already connected with Mukden, and altogether over 500 miles of track have been completed. It is only the heavy tunnelling through the Chingan and Klite Amon ranges that will defer the opening of the whole system till 1902. Thus, if all this be taken into account, it will readily appear that Russia, in temporarily effacing herself in Korea and so avoiding friction with Japan there, was the very reverse of ill-advised. Of late, however, signs of renewed activity in the Peninsula on her part have not been wanting alto-

gether. Several of her subjects have applied for seemingly harmless concessions; and, in view of the opening of the new port of Masampo—one of the finest harbors in the world—a large extent of ground was purchased there by Russians, on behalf of the Russian Government, it is believed. Thereupon, some Japanese subjects quietly bought the foreshore of these lots, and, in spite of Russian representations to the Korean Government, these Japanese purchasers have got their title-deeds. There was a good deal of excitement over the incident, but a war over the Masampo foreshore question is not a very likely contingency. Another possible indication of renewed Russian activity in Korea is the appointment of M. Pavloff as representative at Seoul. It was M. Pavloff that negotiated the Port Arthur lease-convention, and it was he who carried things with such a high hand at Peking in the matter of railway concessions. He is seemingly an able and a resolute man, strongly bent upon a vigorous forward policy. At the same time, there are rumors of an attempt on the part of Korea to obtain a loan of yen 5,000,000 or yen 7,000,000 from Russia on the pledge of her northern provinces, but these rumors may be like a good many others that we hear—unfounded.

One thing, however, is certain, and that is that the present Japanese Cabinet, while by no means eager for war, will not tamely submit to any infraction of the terms of the Nissi-Rosen Protocol. That document is Japan's charter for the peaceful, economic and industrial conquest of Korea which she evidently contemplates. The energy with which she has been pushing this purpose and the development of her commercial interests in the little Empire have of late been very remarkable, and stand forth in marked contrast to the apathy with which she has regarded most of the commercial advantages in China acquired by the Treaty of Shimonoseki. So long as she remains free to develop her legitimate interests in Korea, so long as the Nissi-Rosen Protocol is observed, Japan will be satisfied. The average Japanese is, indeed, very prone to be swayed by emotion, even by that spurious emotion called sentimentality. But hitherto the foreign policy of the nation has been conducted by the cold clear light of reason, and the statesmen at the head of affairs will not be likely to engage in armed strife without the amplest justification for so doing.

JAMES MURDOCH.